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ABSTRACT

This document explores the way in which courage, as a central virtue, and friendship, as a valued human state, have a significant place within the view of the education of character. Education of character is determined to bridge the gap between moral judgment and moral action. This paper has five sections. First, the need for character education is examined using the example of the failure of sex education. Second, the need for character education is approached from the academic context using the weakness-of-will issue to substantiate the need. The two contemporary perspectives on moral education (espoused by Lawrence Kohlberg and Barry Chazan) are discussed. Third, it is argued that friendship and courage are necessary elements of character education. Fourth and fifth, the development of courage and friendship is discussed. Appended are 20 references. (SI)

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COURAGE, FRIENDSHIP AND CHARACTER EDUCATION

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COURAGE, FRIENDSHIP AND CHARACTER EDUCATION

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Herbert Spencer's belief that education is concerned with nothing less than the formation of character looks quaint in the context of education systems in the modern industrial world. Today's focus, in Mark Holmes' account, is on allocation, basic skills and custody. (Holmes 1988 pp 234-235) In matters of 'values' education or moral education, American schooling seems beset by moral and religious pluralism such that teachers frequently withdraw (or are mandated so to do) from discussion of major controversial issues which individuals and the larger society faces. MacIntyre argues that moral discourse in this pluralistic society is a kind of pop emotivism such that few teachers could find an effective justification for moral beliefs on non-religious grounds. (Macintyre 1982: see also Stout: 1988) On many major moral issues, therefore, teachers are likely to be silent.

Furthermore much of the public argument about moral education focusses on what <u>divides</u> individuals, regions or ethnic cultures rather than on what they have <u>in common</u>. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the contemporary issues of drug-taking and sexual relations in the context of AIDS and the role that education is to play within that context. This is the practical situation in which the discussion in this paper is located.

Character Education is often defined very broadly (see Pritchard 1988). In tone, method and content it frequently resembles the paternal nostrums expressed by Polonius to Laertes:

> There; my blessing with thee!
> And these few precepts in thy memory
> see thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
> Nor any unproportioned thought his act.
> Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
> Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
> Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel;
> But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
> Of each new-hatch'd, unfledged comrade. Beware
> Of entrance to a quarrel, but being in,
> Bear't that the opposed may beware of thee.
> Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice;
> Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgement.
> Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
> But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy
> For the apparel oft proclaims the man,
> And they in France of the best rank and station
> Are of a most select and generous chief in that.
> Neither a borrower nor a lender be;
> For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
> And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
> This above all: to thine own self be true,
> And it must follow, as the night the day,
> Thou canst not then be false to any man.
>
> (Hamlet: Act I. Sc III)

A contemporary Polonius might urge his son to 'Just say NO!' but we do not know enough about moral education practices within families to assert even that with any confidence. Laertes, and his modern equivalents, may remember the advice and instruction of their parents: but do they act on them? Neither Kohlberg nor values-clarification theorists adequately address this gap between moral judgement and moral action. That critically important gap will be here identified, following Peters, as the education of character. The identification of character education in this way both avoids the scatter-shot view of

character Polonius has and it also limits the focus to that particular range of human virtues which describe those who successfully move from judgement to action. In particular this paper is an exploration of the ways in which courage, as a central virtue, and friendship, as a valued human state have a significant place within this narrower view of the education of character.

I : THE EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT : A New Challenge

The Failure of Sex Education

In 1982 75% of junior and senior high schools and two-thirds of all elementary schools offered sex education as part of their curriculum. Programs ranged from a unit in general and life science classes to year-long courses in which decision making and behavioral changes, in addition to the biological processes, were course objectives. (Kirby, 1984)

Sex education programs result in improved scores assessing factual knowledge concerning sexual processes. However, no statistically significant differences have been found between control and experimental groups in attitudinal and behavioral changes or decision-making ability when these objectives are included in the curriculum. (Kirby 1984) This may be the result of real-life situations providing the identical impact on self understanding or methodological problems in data collection including difficulty in conducting longitudinal studies in this area.

Sex education seems simply a failure in terms of its influence on students' attitudes and behavior, if sexual restraint is seen as a primary objective. Of course, as Kirby cautions, in contrast to the myriad of influences upon the adolescent - family, peer group, mass media, etc. - the time spent in sex education programs in school is very small. The problem may equally be that emphasis on cognitive objectives misses the point. Knowledge does not imply virtue and, if reason is not the slave of passion, for the adolescent the reconciliation of the two is not easily accomplished.

That the connection between education and behavioral change is negligible is a devastating conclusion in the face of AIDS. Responsible sexual behavior and the elimination of IV drug use has become imperative in view of the fatal consequences of the syndrome. The details are well-known: the complex of diseases that comprise AIDS may appear one to five years after infection; asymptomatic seropositive individuals are lifelong carriers of the virus and can transmit the virus through the exchange of blood and semen. (Surgeon-General's Report 1986) Radical changes in ethos and conduct among male homosexuals has been dramatic (Patton 1985), but there are few signs that teenage heterosexual behavior has been drastically influenced by publicity and education thus far. (Feraios et al. 1987)

Expert opinion held world-wide stresses that only through changes in behavior, brought about through education, can the spread of AIDS be curtailed. Late adolescents and early adults

who are primarily engaged in heterosexual practice are the group prospectively at risk. Since effective vaccination is at least five years away, AIDS is not simply a problem for the current cohort of teenagers. Schools will have to face the consequences of the failure of sex (and drug) education. For these reasons, but not for these reasons alone, alternative approaches to moral education in schools need to be explored and radical reappraisal of contemporary practice is needed. Maybe consideration of such problems through the development of particular virtues of character will indicate areas of consensus in the pluralist landscape.

II THE ACADEMIC CONTEXT: A New Approach

Moral Education and Character Education

The social evils that are manifest in the problems of AIDS and substance abuse are a highly visible part of wider problems of values education and moral education in the nation's schools, e.g. the influence of moral pluralism, debate on the school's proper functions, and teachers insufficiently sophisticated or trained to undertake moral education. In our view one key to the problem of moral education is for schools to address the gap between knowledge and action, reflective of the ancient problem about weakness of will: why do people not do what they know to be right?

In an important but neglected paper, the British philosopher of education Richard Peters gave the analogy of the life of the

moral agent to that of the work of a state, with its legislative, judicial and executive functions. Moral Education would focus on these three capacities of the moral person: the 'legislative' where the individual has a set of rules and principles, the 'judicial' where the person judges either between conflicting rules or their applicability to moral situations, and the 'executive' where the person has the will to put these beliefs and judgments into action. (Peters 1974) (Peters did not suppose, of course, that was all there was to it.)

He suggested that the 'executive' capacity is what we describe when we say a person has character: he or she has developed not simply the capability of putting belief into action, but has also developed a particular style of so doing. This he distinguished from Victorian conceptions of character education in which, it is sometimes thought, the outcome was to be the production of stereotypes. Nor would the education of character include all Polonius' list of good habits such as temperance, being a good listener, never borrowing nor lending, or taking care what one wears. Character Education, on this account, does not include the whole gamut of moral, personal and social education but is a crucial and neglected constituent of it, which, briefly may be called the education of the will. (see Sockett 1988).

Moral philosophers have tended to concentrate on the problem of <u>weakness</u> of will. Educators may more properly be concerned with the <u>development</u> of will, i.e. those capacities as virtues

which describe action based on knowledge. That must include the development of such procedural capabilities as determination, courage and confidence, self-control, attention, concentration, carefulness, capabilities which metaphorically empower an individual to reach his or her ends. Of course, such an education cannot float free of the substantive teaching of such virtues as justice, compassion and honesty. Equally, without its development, the individual will not be able to live a moral life. So, if abstinence, whether from indiscriminate sex or drug use, is appropriate, the individual child needs educational programs which develop the will to abstain. Mere preaching, Polonius-style, is not likely to fare too well. Whatever schools may do by way of moral education, the education of character is a critical part.

Two contemporary perspectives on moral education

There are various theoretical perspectives which have informed moral education, for example, the psychoanalytical model, the cognitive development model and the social learning model. In recent years the dominant research on moral education has been the work of Lawrence Kohlberg (Kohlberg 1987) whose primary focus has been on the cognitive development of moral judgment and rational autonomy. Much sex education practice has, however, included matters of social learning, e.g. through getting children to understand peer-group pressures and the procedural strategies of Values Clarification (Raths et al. 1966)

Kohlberg initially opposed his theory of moral development

to indoctrinative moral education, and he sought to describe the interactive nature of moral life. (Kohlberg 1987) His stage theory was built on the Kantian notion of justice as the central substantive moral principle, emphasizing the cognitive processes of judgment backed by rational moral understanding. One of the serious questions raised by critics, and one which Kohlberg was not able to resolve to his complete satisfaction, is how his theory accounts for the connection between moral judgment and moral action. He failed, in other words, to take the executive capacity seriously enough.

Although Values Clarification has been debunked as philosophically untethered, its influence on curricular programs should not be underestimated. (Chazan 1986) The strategies outlined by its proponents are easily adaptable to classroom use. Further its emphasis on decision-making skills is responsive to the confusion of moral pluralism and the distrust of indoctrinative education. Social learning theory also may contribute to character education through insights into the effects of peer-group membership on the individual learner. But it fails to differentiate the psychological notion of peer-group from the moral concept of friendship. Friendship is a morally significant relationship between individuals, as Polonius does indicate. It has particular potential for children.

It is possible to explore the failures of these two perspectives by taking courage, a primary Aristotelian virtue as a key personal capability within the executive capacity of the

moral agent and by linking to it friendship to replace the morally sterile notion of the peer group, and seeing in what ways they have a place within the delimited notion of the education of character which Peters outlined.

III THE EDUCATION OF CHARACTER

Sockett has argued that qualities of will can be categorized as qualities of endeavor, heed and control, and we draw here on that work. (Sockett op. cit) Determination and such other qualities as persistence, perseverance, and doggedness seem characteristic qualities of endeavour. Carefulness, concentration, conscientiousness and other qualities such as vigilance and deliberation may be regarded as qualities of heed. (Ryle 1949) Forbearance and self-restraint, patience and endurance and some other specific qualities such as punctuality and tidiness seem obvious qualities of control. Other such qualities of will, courage and temperance, for example, may be partly constituted by one or more of these categorizing qualities.

The educational task must include the matter of teaching children both to make an effort and how to make an effort, to develop a fabric of personal qualities to deploy as they face up to the difficulties of life. For common to all cases of the exercise of will and to each of these qualities is the notion of effort, notwithstanding the fact that their consistent practice may lead to routinization in habit. Effort here does not mean

simply trying -- where trying is a synonym of intending -- but effort as striving. The notion of striving carries with it the assumption of a context of difficulty -- under some description. The difficulties we encounter as we strive for things are obstacles in nature, other people and ourselves. This connection between effort and difficulty frees the conception of these qualities from the notion of weakness (of will) and allows us, inter alia, to admit the fact that challenges to our powers may be seen as positively enjoyable.

Second, the qualities differently describe the way a person regulates his or her behavior; they do not describe the goals an individual has. Such terms are adverbial in significance. They have potential relevance to any area of human behavior and action and may describe, in principle, good or evil conduct. They can be generalizable features of a person's behavior. The development of these qualities in children likewise may be generalizable and uneven; the child who is careful with his carpentry may not be so careful with his calculus.

Third, in the development and exercise of these qualities, even where they become habitual, a person is putting him or her self to the test. The test is one of capacity, skill, judgement, and even temperament, a test of what M. R. Ayers describes as "personal power" (Ayers 1968, pp. 140 ff). In developing these qualities, therefore, one is testing oneself out for getting things done in contexts of difficulty. This is the feature that may have led some teachers to think these qualities are unteach-

able since their development hangs crucially on a learner's willingness to put him or herself on the line. Other people, teachers and administrators, will measure or assess the results of one's efforts, manifest in qualities of endeavour, heed and control.

Our view is that friendship provides consistent opportunities for the exercise of these virtues, and that courage certainly demands endeavour, and maybe heed and control too in situations in life which cannot be predicted. Character, and courage in particular, may be importantly developed through the friendships we make as children.

IV: COURAGE AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

The discussions of courage in classical literature are rooted in contexts of war where bravery is understood in terms of a physical threat to life. Plato, in the Laches, sees courage as moral and physical; true courage is inseparable from knowledge yet it is based on a natural instinct. The courageous man, in Aristotle's account, 'is he who endures or fears the right things and for the right purpose and in the right manner and at the right time, and who shows confidence in the same way.' (Ethics: III vii; 5) The right thing is death, preferably in battle, the right purpose is nobility. Spirit too is necessary to courage, as is knowledge which you acquire as you become courageous. Courage goes beyond confidence to a situation in which an individual knows the character of the dangers to be confronted and does so

for moral (or noble) purposes.

We nowadays have no difficulty in ascribing courage to people in all kinds of situations. Yet if teachers and their students are rarely described as brave or courageous, the notion can still find its way into the classroom context through the terms encouragement and discouragement. Presumably encouraging means putting courage into people, while discouraging conveys something connected to sapping their will.

Children learning are constantly in situations of difficulty. The difficulty is not therefore simply formal, that is, they are trying to learn things they don't understand. It describes a situation invested with fear, and we only have to recall our own experience as child-learners to remember its power. We may be frightened of the difficulty, the consequences of not conquering the difficulty, or be worried, not about the difficulty but the wrath of a parent or teacher, if we fail.

We can seek to encourage our students in all kinds of ways, for example by praising their work. But praise does not necessarily encourage where particular kinds of children lack confidence. Rather, praise may discourage some children who perceive unreachable expectations behind the praise. Equally, holding a child firmly to account, e.g. for a neglected piece of work, may put courage into the child where another might be discouraged. It can provoke the 'I'll show you' (where 'you' is the teacher) kind of response. Teachers have to figure out what encourages and what discourages individual students: that indeed

is where the subtlety of excellent teaching lies.

To encourage a child, then, is to give the child particular kinds of support in these contexts of difficulty. It is not, per se, to convey propositional knowledge. To discourage a child, on the other hand, describes all kinds of situations in which an individual's will is sapped: by careless sarcasm, by over-expectation, by crude comparisons of character or achievement, or even by grossly inefficient teaching of content, or insufficient care for the individual's predicament. Moreover, as we consider the classroom, it is manifest that the ways in which teachers do this is crucial to pupils' learning, connected not just to the absence of cognitive attainments but to different questions of moral character (like making an effort, being conscientious, careful and learning to concentrate). Discouragement covers the variety of actions taken or words uttered which inhibit the child from striving and from facing a situation of difficulty with courage and with confidence.

Issues of courage seem therefore of supreme importance in teaching. We may assume that the target is to build up a disposition in children as they face difficulty. Courage then becomes a disposition, the primacy of which Bernard Williams has recently asserted:

> "If ethical life is to be preserved, then (these) dispositions have to be preserved. But equally, if the ethical life that we have is to be effectively criticized and changed, then it can only be so in ways that can be understood as appropriately modifying the dispositions that we have." (Williams, p 64)

Yet conversation in this area of classroom practice is non-existent. Rather, we have two types of discourse: the functional and manipulative language of reward and punishment on the one hand, and the specific context of moral responsibility found in the notions of praise and blame on the other. There seems no necessary connection between either of these and encouragement and discouragement. Discussion of courage, as a moral disposition, is in a quite different direction of enquiry (viz. difficulty and fear), and is therefore at a quite different level of complexity. It badly needs to be explored further than is possible here both in terms of learning and teaching.

One practical example is contained in the movie Stand and Deliver. This is the 'based on a true' story of a Los Angeles teacher, Jamie Escalante, who teaches mathematics at Garfield High School in East Los Angeles which is, as it were, a typical inner-city urban high school. In results terms, Escalante has enabled significant numbers of students to pass Advanced Placement calculus - 18 in 1982 rising to 87 in 1987.

The movie depicts certain crucially important educational practices: the teacher instilling a desire in students to succeed; his belief that students will rise to the level of the teacher's expectations; his belief that students have to make their own choices, and his creation of a powerful sense of fraternity within which students can be comradely, but severally friends. Escalante is also friendly, though not a friend to each student. Significantly the movie shows the ways in which a

teacher can skillfully give children not merely confidence, but courage. That means supporting them as they put themselves to the test, assisting them to surmount domestic obstacles, but also displaying the kind of positive belief in their capabilities that they catch that confidence. It is a climate of hard-won trust.

With that confidence the students manifest growing self-respect, and respect for the abilities of others. The somewhat dissolute attitudes towards sex and delinquency, briefly portrayed at the beginning of the movie, seem to turn to mutually controlled relationships. For example, the class 'delinquent' (who looks after his bronchitic grandmother) is not found with a knife when the police stop him and his friend: but the incident shows him breaking away from the apparent friendship he had for his delinquent companion.

It is not unreasonable to see Escalante's teaching as an excellent sex education program, not because students necessarily stop having intercourse and/or being lovers, but because he establishes an equilibrium of moral relationships, and engages them in getting control over their lives and thus coming to value themselves. They reach that equilibrium because they have acquired courage. Henceforth for them 'character is destiny' (see George Eliot: Mill on the Floss). It is Escalante who has been responsible for his students' destiny no longer being determined by anatomy.

The development of courage in children, through encouraging or discouraging, unsurprisingly demands a climate of trust and

mutual respect. The confidence that is achieved through facing a difficult situation bravely not only opens up opportunities but it is the basis of self-control. We need, as we assist children in their strivings, to pay detailed attention to teachers and classroom climates which show us how we might do this.

In sum, we need to understand not why children fail to do what they know they ought to do, but how, reciprocally those whom they trust or to whom they have obligation can support them in having the courage and confidence to live moral lives. They need friends.

V FRIENDSHIP

The contexts in which children make moral decisions are shaped by the influence of social pressures, particularly from peers. Social-learning theories are inadequate, however, for differentiating and explaining the relational contexts for moral decisions and behavior. (Maguire 1978; Noddings 1988) A feature of human life which Aristotle highlights in the Nichomachean Ethics and which supplies a relational context, is friendship. The importance of peers in childhood is no secret and has been the subject of countless studies. Nevertheless, the fact that average high schoolers spend 32% of their waking hours in the classroom; the fact that those same students spend 52% of their time with peers, either in the classroom or in other settings; the fact that adolescents experience high affect and activation when with their friends (Csikszentminalyi and Larson 1984)--

these figures only hint at the possibilities for friendship when it is considered as a centerpiece for moral landscape.

The idea that friendship can serve as a context and catalyst for moral courage is embedded in classical accounts. Just as courage is a central virtue in Aristotle's world, so friendship is the relational lodestone for the moral life. Human beings are social organisms, and it is in friendship that they are called and call others to goodness. The modern distillations of friendship in which it becomes possible to speak of honor among thieves or of being befriended by "Fortune 500" corporations would make no sense to Aristotle or Cicero. Associations based purely on utility or pleasure do not constitute the essence of friendship, which is affection for what is good.

In Aristotle's account of friendship, he discusses a wide range of possible human associations. The pursuit of happiness, of the highest human good which is "an activity of the soul in conformity with excellence or virtue," entails relationships with others. In Aristotle's view, friendship either consists of or involves virtue and for that reason has a place in the context of his considerations of ethics and the possibility of living well.

To be a friend is in itself to place oneself in relation to what is good. This relation entails affection and, importantly, activity for the sake of another person. Affection is vital for the classical account of friendship. In this context, friendship is more fundamental than what might be termed "liking" another person. Affection is not the <u>result</u> of pleasure received from

the presence of the other, but the cause. Activity is the second portion of friendship. Because of the affection for the other, one engages in activities of a certain sort to promote and sustain the relationship. The idea that wishes and actions are pursued for the friend's sake is very important. This implies a knowledge of our friends in their particularity since what is good for different persons differs as well as what is good for one person under different circumstances.

Friendship entails association and community, and friends are characterized by the pleasure they receive from being in association with another who holds common virtues. While Aristotle advocates living together with one's friends, it is not apparent that he means sharing a household but rather sharing the pursuits of one's life with one's friend.

It is precisely this kind of planning and sharing that can take place in classrooms. Students, as they are encouraged to take the moral lives of themselves and their fellows seriously, are in a position to appreciate the goodness of the existence and activities of their friends. Being and having a friend is simultaneously a support when one is "put to the test" and a challenge in itself.

When our friendships are based in the active affection for what is good in and for our friends, we are placed in a position to observe one another's actions. At the same time we become obligated to pursue our friends' good for the friends' sake. We offer correction whenever necessary since we are obligated to

promote what is good in general and in every particular situation. Friends steer us away from error, share in our joys and sorrows, and provide us with opportunities to do and be what is good on their behalf as well. The friendship based in the love of what is good has goodness as its genesis, noble actions and emotions as its means, and the highest fulfillment of the virtue of friendship as its end. This friendship enables, promotes, and demarks the activity of the good person in a happy life.

The classical view of friendship can sound, in its presentation, like an ideal -- one that is not only not relevant to the lives of children but not practicable. However, the promotion of moral courage necessitates educating children to engage in relationships in which they take responsibility for others as well as for themselves and in which that responsibility is likewise taken by others for them. The ability to understand a given set of rules or to make judgments based on those rules does not make clear why and how to pursue certain actions or how and why to leave off others. Friendship obligates us to take the welfare of our friends into account, and that moves us in three ways; to take positive action to promote and sustain the moral behavior of the friend; to prevent behavior that would harm the friend in body or in soul; and to act in ways that promote our own goodness so that we remain a good as a friend.

We might, for example, engage in peer pressure to promote the discussion of sexual health, actively discourage drug use

among our group of friends, and not take drugs ourselves. Friends in this case are the ones that you can count on to tell you seemingly trivial things like 'your breath smells' or 'your slip is showing': or, more important things, e.g. issues of responsibility in sexual activities. They are the ones with whom you can freely share academic and personal triumphs and failings. Friendship does not shrink from criticism. In fact, the capacity for truth-telling is enhanced, since the trust that is necessary for friendship is based in part on the understanding of friends that advice and criticism are offered in goodwill and love rather than envy or self-righteousness.

Friendship does not eliminate the fearsome and difficult situations children find themselves in. Nor does it make the decisions. When they find themselves in those situations, they rely on a variety of personal resources -- what they believe to be right, what can keep them from getting into trouble, what they want at the moment, what they have heard from and observed of the adults in their lives. Being actively involved in friendships becomes for them one more very important resource in the face of difficulty. Friendship provides a context in which challenges can be viewed positively and faced actively and with (moral) courage.

The power of the peer group is considerable; yet in itself it is not positive or negative. The same intensity of high affect and activation, loss of boredom and high concentration can result in high academic achievement and school vandalism.

(Csikszentmihalyi and Larson 1978) Both groups know the rules, but the latter find their challenges in circumventing them. Making more rules or instituting tougher penalties can have the effect of simply raising the stakes. In the same way reciting drunk driving statistics or AIDS warnings may boost the challenge of "not getting caught." Friendship in its particular moral focus, provides a possible antidote. It is a relationship based not solely on feeling good or the enjoyment of another person's company, but on the active promotion and sustenance of what is good in all respects for the friends even in difficult or frightening circumstances. Friendship is practical and "hands-on"; just as courage becomes manifestly a virtue in the context of a difficult situation, so friendship provides consistent, concrete opportunities for moral engagement and activity.

None of this is to suggest the institution of Friendship 101 into the curriculum. There are, however, countless opportunities in the classroom for the discussion of true friendship as well as for its tacit encouragement. Neither is the promotion of friendship the complete solution (if there could be such a thing) to the problem of the development of courage. Nevertheless, the ubiquity of the peer group and the potential benefits of infusing those groups and the individual within them with positive moral purpose suggests that we urgently need to balance the notion of 'peer group' with a much more sophisticated understanding of, and concern for, friendship in the educational context.

VI CONCLUSION

This paper is searching for a way forward in the face of a moral pluralism which seems to make any coherent moral education possible in many schools. It suggests that we need to look both at teachers' classroom practice in terms of how virtues of will, particularly courage, might be developed; to search for other Escalantes whose students' academic performances have not been so widely publicized. Perhaps we need to examine the structure of schools divided so rigidly by chronological age and by tracking and grouping practices and to ask to what extent might schools configure student groups on the basis of friendships and how far might that `natural' relationship be promoted and its understanding deepened in schools? And much else.

While information about the dangers of indiscriminate sex and drug use is clearly necessary for all students, the task of enabling them to translate that knowledge into action remains the most intractable. Our emphasis on courage and friendship suggests that we need to create contexts in which individuals have acquired self-respect through facing the challenge of situations fraught with difficulty and fear. The equilibrium of moral relationships that can provide has then to be matched by relations of friendship in which individuals mutually contribute to each other's good. The `hoops of steel' that friends provide are potentially more powerful than the challenges to court danger so often the currency of the companions of the peer group. However the immediate question is whether this approach through

courage and friendship to the intractable problems of character education and moral education is both sound and practicable. If it is, then research and development strategies might be conducted empirically, but influenced by Jeffrey Stout's interesting notion of moral philosophy as 'reflexive ethnography'. (Stout, op cit.,pp 70-73) We need more than a movie as a solid basis for classroom and school work.

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